

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9709

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL IBADAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 5464

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NI, US, EGEN, UNGA, ENRG

SUBJECT: BROAD ASPECTS OF US/NIGERIAN RELATIONS AS SEEN BY
IYALLA

REF: STATE 124719 AND 126216

1. SUMMARY: MY FIRST CALL ON MEA PERMSEC IYALLA PROVIDED GOOD OPPORTUNITY DISCUSS THE SECRETARY'S RECENT SPEECHES ON ENERGY AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS. WE ALSO EXCHANGED VIEWS ON BROAD GENERAL QUESTIONS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AS WELL AS SEVERAL SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF CURRENT CONCERN. IYALLA WAS WELL PREPARED FOR MEETING, IN WHICH HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ECONOMIC DIRECTOR ADEKUOYE AND PRIVATE SECRETARY SAGAY. HE HAD OBVIOUSLY PLANNED IN ADVANCE TO RAISE WITH ME FIVE SPECIFIC POINTS: ALLEGED US DISINTEREST IN AFRICA, NIGERIAN CONCERN FOR WHAT HE CALLED "A MANIFESTATION OF
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US INTEREST IN NIGERIA," NIGERIAN SURPRISE AND PLEASURE REGARDING

APPARENT SWITCH OF US POLICY ON COMMODITIES, THE PROBLEMS OF LABOR ATTACHE POSITION IN EMBASSY AND FMG'S URGENT REQUIREMENT THAT WE VACATE AID/USIS/CONSULATE OFFICE QUARTERS (EMBASSY ANNEX). FIRST THREE OF THESE MATTERS REPORTED IN THIS TELEGRAM. LATTER TWO AND OTHER POINTS BY SEPTTEL. END SUMMARY

2. ATMOSPHERICS. IYALLA'S WELCOME WAS GRACIOUS. HE COMPLIMENTED ME "FOR YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR." HE SAID HE HAD WANTED TO MEET FOR SOME TIME AND HAD HOPED BE ABLE DO SO AT AAI MEETING IN KINSHASA IN JANUARY, BUT AT LAST MINUTE COULD NOT ATTEND. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE MEETING "WAS EXTREMELY INTERESTING." I CONCEDED THE POINT.

3. US RELATIONS WITH AFRICA. IYALLA QUESTIONED THE LOW PRIORITY HE CLAIMED THE US PUT ON ITS RELATIONS WITH AFRICA. I SAID INTERESTS DETERMINE PRIORITIES, AND I THOUGHT US INTERESTS IN AFRICA WERE BECOMING RECOGNIZED AS MORE IMPORTANT IN THE CONTEXT OF INCREASING INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING WORLDS. IYALLA SAID HE HOPED THIS WOULD BE THE CASE.

4. US RELATIONS WITH NIGERIA. IYALLA SAID HE WAS CONCERNED THAT, APART FROM THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES, THERE WAS LITTLE TANGIBLE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN NIGERIA ON THE PART OF US INVESTORS. NIGERIA HAD ALWAYS SOUGHT INVESTMENT IN OTHER AREAS AND REMAINED OPEN TO IT. HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN THE FLY-BY-NIGHT OPERATOR WHO THOUGHT HE COULD MAKE A QUICK SALE OR PROMOTE A SHORT-TERM LUCRATIVE DEAL. WHAT NIGERIA NEEDED INSTEAD WAS THE RESPONSIBLE AMERICAN CONCERN THAT COULD BRING NEEDED TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTISE INTO LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP WITH NIGERIAN COUNTERPARTS. HE SAID THE OPIC AGREEMENT DID NOT SEEM TO BE PRODUCING RESULTS. HE SAID THIS AGREEMENT HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY NIGERIA WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM BECAUSE IT SEEMED TO INDICATE A LACK OF TRUST AND CONFIDENCE. "WE CAN ASSURE YOU OF YOUR WELCOME."

5. I INDICATED THAT, DURING THE WEEKS I SPENT IN CONSULTATIONS WITH THE US PRIVATE SECTOR PRIOR TO DEPARTING FOR LAGOS, I HAD COME INTO CONTACT WITH A NUMBER OF COMPANIES WHO FITTED HIS DESCRIPTION OF WHAT NIGERIA WANTED. SIMILARLY, HERE IN NIGERIA I HAD OBSERVED A CORRESPONDING INTEREST IN DISCUSSIONS WITH POTENTIAL AMERICAN INVESTORS. I ASKED HIM WHETHER HE THOUGHT CONFIDENTIAL

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ADEQUATE CHANNELS EXISTED FOR BRINGING THE TWO SIDES TOGETHER. IYALLA QUESTIONED WHETHER ADDITIONAL STEPS NEEDED TO BE TAKEN, CITING HIS PERSONAL AWARENESS OF THE SPECIAL INTEREST NIGERIA HOLDS FOR MANY AMERICANS. I MENTIONED SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES IN WHICH OUR SEVEN-MAN ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION WAS ENGAGED IN EFFORT IMPROVE AND EXPAND RELATIONSHIPS. I AGREED THAT WE HAD MUTUAL INTEREST IN WORKING CLOSELY ON THIS QUESTION OVER THE MONTHS AHEAD. I THOUGHT THAT OTHER AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST,

SUCH AS SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION/CULTURE SHOULD BE SIMILARLY EXAMINED WITH A VIEW TO STRENGTHENING ALREADY EXCELLENT RELATIONSHIPS.

6. I ASKED IYALLA WHETHER HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE JOINT COMMISSIONS THAT SOME COUNTRIES HAD ESTABLISHED WITH THE US IN ORDER TO WORK ON THESE KINDS OF THINGS. HE SAID "THEY SEEM TO BE ALL OVER THE PLACE." HE THEN MENTIONED A RECENT YUGOSLAV STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT A JOINT COMMISSION WAS TO BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA AND NIGERIA. HE SAID THE YUGOSLAVS HAD "APPARENTLY SLIPPED THIS IN ON US." HIS MINISTRY HAD KNOWN NOTHING ABOUT IT AND HE HAD NO IDEA WHAT PURPOSE IT WAS TO SERVE. AS A GENERAL RULE, HE SAID, NIGERIA BELIEVES IN ESTABLISHED CHANNELS. (COMMENT: IN SPITE OF IYALLA'S OFF-THE-CUFF SKEPTICISM, I BELIEVE I MAY FIND AT LEAST CURIOSITY IF NOT MEANINGFUL INTEREST ON THIS POINT THE NEXT TIME I SEE HIM.)

7. COMMODITIES. IYALLA TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO REMARK WITH INTEREST AND APPROVAL CONCERNING RECENT US STATEMENTS WHICH HE THOUGHT INDICATED A CHANGE OF POLICY CONCERNING DISCUSSION OF NON-OIL RAW MATERIALS IN A FUTURE PRODUCER-COLRUGER CONFERENCE. THIS PROVIDED ME WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE HIM SEVERAL SETS OF COPIES OF SECRETARY'S OECD AND IEA SPEECHES. HE SAID HE WAS MUCH INTERESTED AND WOULD ASSURE THAT THEY RECEIVED HIS MINISTRY'S CAREFUL ATTENTION. I WENT OVER MAIN POINTS OF BOTH ADDRESSES WITH HIM. HE SAID HE HOPED NEW PHILOSOPHY WOULD APPLY TO US STANCE ON COCOA. HE MAINTAINED THAT OUR PREVIOUS POSITION HAD BEEN "NOT PARTICULARLY HELPFUL." HE THEN REFERRED TO CONCEPT OF COMMISSIONS, CITING THOSE THE SECRETARY HAS PROPOSED FOR ENERGY, OTHER RAW MATERIALS, AND THE PROBLEMS OF THE MSA COUNTRIES. HE WONDERED WHETHER PROLIFERATION OF SUCH STRUCTURES WOULD NOT FURTHER COMPLICATE A RATIONAL DEBATE ON THE ISSUES. I EXPLAINED TENTATIVE US THINKING ON ROLE AND MEMBERSHIP

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OF THESE COMMISSIONS ALONG LINES OF IEA SPEECH AND DEPARTMENTAL GUIDANCE.

8. 7TH SPECIAL SESSION. I THEN DISCUSSED US VIEWS ON PROSPECTS FOR UPCOMING UNGA SPECIAL SESSION, DRAWING ON MATERIALS IN STATE 112992 AND 75525. IYALLA SAID NIGERIA'S PRINCIPAL CONCERNS AT THE MEETING WOULD BE, FIRST, TO FOCUS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES RATHER THAN WASTE TIME WITH RHETORIC. (I CONCURRED ON THAT ONE.) SPECIFIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO NIGERIA WOULD BE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RAW MATERIAL PRICES AND INFLATIONARY INCREASES IN THE COST OF MANUFACTURED GOODS, ALONG WITH THE QUESTION OF GENERAL WORLD FINANCIAL STABILITY. HE HAD NO ARGUMENT WITH THE FIVE TOPICS THE US WILL PROPOSE AS PRINCIPAL PROBLEM AREAS FOR GA CONSIDERATION.

9. MISCELLANEOUS. OTHER ISSUES THAT WE DISCUSSED, BEING REPORTED BY SEPTEL, WERE CONSULATE IN PORT HARCOURT AND USIS BRANCH POST IN ENUGU, DISPUTE CONCERNING AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE COMPANY, STATUS OF THE ELIAS-WARREN FELLOWSHIP PROPOSAL, ROLE OF THE EMBASSY LABOR OFFICER, AND THE FMG'S REQUEST THAT WE VACATE EMBASSY ANNEX.
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